India

FOR THE

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NOTES AND NEWS.

THE Viceroy's telegram announces the continuance of rain. Inland, however, the quantity is admitted to be "only about half-normal." For all that, the official conclusion is courageous: "Prospects generally good." The reported fall of prices in eight Bombay districts certainly looks well. Still the total numbers in receipt of relief are given at 553,000—a reduction of only 3,000 on the report of July 27. Bombay Native States, Madras, and Central Provinces remain unchanged. Is there no change in fact, or is there no fresh information? Bombay has fallen 6,000, and Hyderabad and Central India States 1,000 each, while Baroda has gone up 2,000 (to 32,000, which indicates considerable severity), and Mysore comes into the list with 3,000. But "a considerable reduction is shortly expected." The power of hopeful anticipation manifested by the Government of India extorts surprise, if not admiration.

We join in the universal regret for the death of the Empress Frederick, and in the deep sympathy of the nation with the King, her brother, and with the German Emperor and the German people. She was not only our "Princess Royal," she was one of the ablest and noblest women of her time. But for untoward circumstances, which marred greatly the admirable work she might have done for Germany, she would have played a far more prominent and beneficent part in her adopted country, and enjoyed a much happier life. Yet her influence will undoubtedly continue for long to sway the larger minds among her son's subjects. We have pleasure in publishing the following correspondence:—

[Telegram.]

Private Secretary, the King and Emperor of India,
Marlborough House.

London Indian Society express their deep sympathy and condolence at the death of her Majesty the Empress Frederick.

D. Naoroji (President).

72, Anerley Park, S.E.

[Reply Telegram.]

Buckingham Palace.

D. Naoroji, Esq., 72, Anerley Park, S.E.

The King thanks the President and members of the London Indian Society for their kind message.

Equerry.

We have special pleasure in reprinting in another column our witty and wise contemporary "Punch's" grave and suggestive verses (July 31) embodying the plaint of India. In point of insight and foresight, tone and timeliness, they maintain the best traditions of Mr. Punch. They gather up and present with moving effect teachings that we have laboured for many years to deliver and enforce. We would fain permit ourselves to hope that the voice of "Punch" will penetrate the public and the official mind, arousing conscience, and urging to practical remedies for India's distress and England's humiliation.

A virile and statesmanlike policy might soon redeem the late Queen-Empress's noble anticipations from the slough of satire and shame into which they have been allowed to fall. If the Government would but cease to talk of the "recuperative power" and the "prosperity" of India—talk so "very like nonsense," as one of their most powerful Anglo-Indian Press friends has been candid enough to tell them—and if they would frankly go to the roots of the mischief, a momentary false popularity might soon be replaced by an unparalleled administrative reward. The Indian's dull resignation, or self-abandonment to fate, which officialism passes off for contentment, might soon be converted into a genuine enjoyment of life, the best security of British rule. And when "the same old wrong" no longer "grows on untouched," but is ruthlessly uprooted, what can be more certain than the reward of gratitude? Even in these dark days, the educated Indians gratefully acknowledge with discrimination very large grounds of gratitude, and their dissatisfaction with Government policy and administration has been consistently manifested in rigidly constitutional forms—a self-restraint in "playing a freeman's part" that extorts astonishment as well as admiration from unbiassed observers, and that deserves not a little grateful recognition in practical form. But where is the statesman for the occasion? Anyhow, there will be no lack of Indian gratitude to Mr. Punch.

Lord Hobhouse, who has reached the great age of 81, has just retired from the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, where he has sat as an unpaid member since 1881. He was Legal Member of the Viceroy's Legislative Council as far back as 1872-77. As it is plain that the failure of the Colonial representatives to see eye to eye with Mr. Chamberlain must postpone indefinitely a reconstruction of the Court of Final Appeal from the Colonies and India, the immediate object would seem to be to strengthen the existing tribunal. We hope, therefore, that the Government will take the opportunity of supplying the place of Lord Hobhouse by a Native Indian lawyer of proved ability and experience.

The Indian income tax, which is assessed on incomes of Rs. 500 and upwards, does not directly touch the great mass of the population, whose annual income does not exceed one twentieth of that amount. The proceeds have risen at the average rate of 3 per cent. a year. The number of assessees has grown from 354,594 to 482,482—an increase of 36 per cent in 14 years. In 1899-1900, nearly 30 per cent. of the proceeds of the tax—or £1,289,000—came from salaries and pensions of State servants. The trading companies—railway, cotton-spinning and weaving, and banking companies—provided only 7 per cent. The money-lenders contributed much the largest proportion in the miscellaneous classes. A writer in the "Times" remarks very truly: "The figures illustrate only too clearly the economic backwardness of the Indian population." Yes; just imagine an income-tax raised mainly from officials and money-lenders! Yet the authorities tell the credulous British public that the country is prosperous!

The treatment of Natives in South Africa, for which Mr. Chamberlain makes promises that sound tolerable to the ear, is a question that must be closely watched in Parliament, lest the promise fail to the hope. Sir William Harcourt the other night drove home the argument against the open expectations of the mining capitalists. To these enterprising gentlemen, whose prime concern is to make as much money as possible in the shortest time, the Native is simply an animal that could give them cheap labour, but won't unless he be legally compelled. No doubt it would be a good thing for the Native if he would devote himself to moderately steady work; but to compel him, by taxation or otherwise, is a matter of some delicacy, involving more than meets the uninstructed eye or ear. The white population of South Africa scarcely draw a line

between the Natives and the Indians. It is for thoughtful members of Parliament to see to the real protection of the Indian as well as of the Kaffir.

The Mackay correspondent of the "Times" (August 5), treating the debate on coloured labour in the Commonwealth Parliament from the point of view of Queensland and sugar, finds the speeches characterised by "a marvellous lack of knowledge of the essential facts" of the question "as it affects the sugar industry in this State." But there is more than sugar in the matter. "Though the Prime Minister's utterances may be said to dispose of the question for the moment," says the correspondent, "there is no doubt that a wide-spread feeling exists that Australia must steadily strengthen her position in the South Pacific, even possibly in the future in the direction of bringing the majority of the islands under her direct control." The correspondent has difficulty in seeing "how any such policy can be reconciled with the strong anti-coloured labour views at present also held." Indeed, "if Australia is really to exclude all coloured races, there is a big contract before her." The correspondent anticipates that the discussion will lead to a change of opinion, "having for its effect to substitute for sentiment a plain practical policy which recognises the essential facts that have to be dealt with." The friends of the immigrant Indian, then, may count upon allies, and the Home Government may be strengthened to resist the absurd energy of anti-colour legislation, which seems to be the main subject before the new Commonwealth Parliament.

There is already a disposition on the part of those who most strongly advocated the prevention of land alienation in the Punjab to admit that great difficulties will attend the working of the Act. Thus the "Pioneer," while insisting that most of the defects in the original draft have been removed, goes on to say that "even its most sanguine admirers can hardly claim that the Act has no defects left." One of these is the great amount of work thrown on the Deputy Commissioner and the subordinate officers of Revenue. The "Pioneer" also points out that there is no decisive indication as to where the line is to be drawn between agriculturists to whom the peasant can sell his land freely and non-agriculturists. If those are to be considered agriculturists who were so at the time of the first regular settlement in 1870, this would include some money-lenders who are agriculturists as well. In other words, it would create a favoured class of money-lenders. The effect of the Act would then be to make the loan market more stringent, by checking competition amongst the money-lenders while still allowing alienation in the interest of these favoured individuals.

The Deccan Sabha having petitioned against the Bombay Land Revenue Code Amendment Bill, Mr. J. L. Jenkins, Acting-Secretary to Government Legislative Department, has replied under date of July 12. Therein it is argued that the petitioners have objected not so much to the principle of the Bill as to the supposed intentions of the Government. Mr. Jenkins declares that any one who chooses can by paying up his arrears prevent the confiscation of his land; nor does it follow that in every case where the new tenure might be established the Government will do so. But we imagine both these points were already recognised by the public. Indeed, the first had been insisted on by the opponents of the Bill, who argued that to save his proprietary rights, the peasant would borrow at any rate of interest so as to pay his arrears, while the new legislation would make it more difficult and expensive for him to do so.

On the whole the "Times of India" supports the new Bill, though it admits that there is something in Mr. Gokhale's plea for an investigation into the indebtedness of the Bombay peasantry before we go far in the direction of legislation. Our contemporary lays great stress on the remission of all arrears which is necessarily to take place on the establishment of the new tenancy without power of alienation. As the failure to pay arrears exposed the rayat to the loss of his holding, his credit must be considered as already gone, so in that respect, argues the "Times of India," he will be in no worse state under the new system than he was in before; but it goes on to point out that his state will certainly be no better if the tender mercies of the Bombay Revenue system are applied to him—a system which assumes that the rayat can pay his assessment in good seasons and bad seasons alike. It, therefore, hails with pleasure Mr. Monteath's undertaking that "elasticity" should now be introduced into revenue collection.

The dislike of the Pariahs to emigrate has long been notorious, but now it seems that a great change has come over them. They are described as "pouring out of the country." In the opinion of the "Madras Mail" this is a "testimony to the intolerable hardship of the life they are living." "It is beyond question that the chief force behind this wholesale emigration movement is the old potent agency of hunger." Taking into account the disinclination of the people to move, it seems to show, as our contemporary insists, that the pressure of hunger on the lowest and landless classes has been much greater than the authorities are willing to admit. People who, as we are told, will not travel five miles to obtain employment on the famine relief works and who will not accept famine labour at famine rates, are yet prepared to face the unknown dangers of sea and exile.

The "Madras Mail," however, though it considers that hunger is the chief cause of the exodus, is probably right in declaring that it is not the only cause. Something must be allowed for the change in the Pariah's position. The effect of English civilisation on India tends always to the breaking down of the old system of status in favour of the new European system of contract. Indian civilisation has, indeed, shown itself far from pliant in the matter. Its power of resistance has been great. But the pressure of famine is a powerful reinforcement against the old organisation of society. It is not surprising, therefore, that the position of the Pariah has much changed, that he is no longer always a hereditary servant in one family receiving his daily measure of food and his perquisites in harvest time. Now he is becoming a day-labourer, turned adrift when he is not wanted, and accounted an intolerable burden in times of famine.

There is thus every inducement for the Pariah to emigrate. And no doubt there will not be wanting plenty of fanatical believers in the over-population theory who will hail this exodus as a great relief to the country. But such emigration is not merely the withdrawal of so many mouths from the country. It is the withdrawal of the very flower of the Pariah population, the men and women in their full vigour, while the very old and the very young, the weak, the shiftless, and the least energetic remain alone as a dead-weight on the resources of the community. Nor is it a slight matter that partly through the carelessness or knavery of the emigration agents, partly through the callousness and recklessness which springs from the breaking of old ties and the going forth into an unknown world, such a movement tends to the destruction of family life. The "Madras Mail" should be strongly supported in its demand that a close watch be kept on the emigration agents. Most of the emigrants go willingly enough, but some of them, it seems, are entrapped.

"British Indian Commerce" (July) suggests that the indigo planter expects too much from his land. "If he will agree to assess his lands and machinery at a fair value, based on the crops which the lands can be made to yield, then certainly there is no doubt but that indigo can be produced so as to show a fair return in respect to both capital and labour employed in producing it." We are not sure that the indigo planter will gain much courage from our contemporary's coldly arithmetical comfort, or that he will "take heart of grace from the fact that the Badische Anilin und Soda Fabrik Company has clearly not yet been able to produce artificial indigo at a profit." Will the experiments in progress under the patronage of the Bengal Government and the auspices of the Behar Planters' Association provide better grounds of hopefulness? "British Indian Commerce" tells the Behar planter that his way to success is "the acquisition of capital, coupled with the employment of all the resources of chemical science, economy in working, and the organisation of the markets

for their produce." Has he really neglected all these things hitherto? If he has, is any external counsel likely to be of the smallest use to him? He cannot possess an organ to reduce it to practice.

The Parliamentary correspondent of the same paper concludes that "word has evidently been sent round the House advising silence on India and the East generally." The quiescence of Government supporters is more or less intelligible, but "it appears singular that the members of the Opposition are just as loth to disturb the serenity of the India Office or the Foreign Office by what might be officially regarded as inopportune queries." On the whole, it does appear singular. What then? "The House of Commons is, in fact, worn out." Well, but have the members no fear of their constituents before their eyes? Or is it that they have more care for their own ease than for the condition of their Indian fellow-subjects? "It is as plain as a pikestaff," says the correspondent, "that the absence of an Indian party from the House of Commons is an evil. Had there been an organised group of members interested in India ready to bring pressure to bear, things might have been different." Our own Parliamentary report shows that there has not been anything like absolute silence; but the remarks of the correspondent are worth weighing. The value of Sir William Wedderburn's incessant labours is becoming felt more and more since his unfortunate withdrawal from the House.

An English correspondent of the "Indian Spectator" (July 7) recommends to its readers a study of the recent official white-books—No. 172 (Estimate of the Revenue and Expenditure of the Government of India for 1900-01) and No. 173 (Home Accounts of the Government of India)—and in connexion with the latter he advises them to peruse Section 52 of the Act of 1858, which prescribes the appointment of an Auditor.

> They will then perceive, by the manner and terms of the appointment of such Auditor, what pains the authors of the Act took to ensure some definite supervision over the expenditure of India's money in this country, in order that Parliament might have, at least, the chance to exercise such control as it was intended should be entrusted to it. As to how far it has failed in that imperial responsibility you can consider at leisure, as by the way did Lord Welby, though little came of his considering. But, turning to the Auditor, my own impression from glancing over the present report, and recalling previous impressions is that the present Auditor has performed his important (and in some respects thankless) duties with assiduity and faithfulness. This difficult and critical duty has not always been carried out as it might and should have been. Therefore, the present Auditor should have thanks on behalf of the Indian tax-payers. The items he deals with in the present report may seem small in amount and often merely incidental, but those who understand this side of public business can realise how invaluable is the effect of such steady and constant vigilance as is here indicated.

The advice is just as valuable for British as for Indian readers, and we hope it will be largely followed.

Mr. J. D. Rees, continuing his graceful futilities in the "Empire Review" for August, expresses the opinion that, "even if the land tax were reduced far below its present figure, the character of the Indian cultivator, and the conditions of his life and being, render it hopeless to expect that he would to any appreciable extent save in a good year to enable him to face a bad season much more than he does under present circumstances." Yet he does admit that for certain "the less the people are taxed the happier they are," and that his opinion, as above stated, "is no ground for relaxing every effort." We find it difficult to reconcile Mr. Rees's opinion with the abundance of capable testimony in favour of the rayat's industry, frugality, and thrift. There have been more recent observers quite as competent as the Abbe Duclos who disagree entirely with his judgment that "misery among the lowest classes in India is attributable to causes beyond the power of any Government to prevent." Are the rayats "the lowest classes"? And has our incomparably beneficent Government been able to do nothing for them in the past century? We hardly expected such an implied condemnation of the powers that be from Mr. Rees. Only, we fancy, Mr. Rees is well aware of the extent to which Government has, or has not, availed itself of the suggestions of Mr. A. O. Hume and Sir James Caird. He knows too, we think, how little the current fury of land legislation is likely to do for the people.

Urged "mainly by recent personal recollection of the state of the chief industry of Bombay as exhibited in the spinning mills," "T.J.B." writes from the Oriental Club to the "Times" (August 6) to rally opinion against certain tariff rearrangements in China consequent upon the payment of an indemnity to the Powers. The arrangement agreed to by the Powers "contemplates only that the existing nominal five per cent. import duty shall be made a full five per cent. duty on all imports," in return for Chinese facilitation of the river approaches of the Pei-ho and the Yang-tsze. But "Lord Cranborne's speech makes it clear that his Majesty's Government are quite prepared later on to entertain proposals for increasing the duty to 10 per cent. in return for certain further concessions." "T.J.B." contends that the trade of India, and especially the yarn export trade, cannot bear the additional burden of 5 per cent. "I do not think," he says, "that anyone who is conversant with the mill industry of the Bombay Presidency and the conditions under which it has existed during the past year or two will for a moment doubt the literal truth of the statement that so much of that industry as is dependent upon the China market would be entirely destroyed by any substantial augmentation of the existing duties."

The Rev. W. Goudie, of Tiruvallur, having learnt that the test works had been closed in North Arcot, wrote to the "Madras Mail" to declare his belief that in the Collectorates of North Arcot and Chingleput there existed acute and general distress. He gave the result of his own experiences. In May he saw whole families "digging up the earth in fields from which a poor crop of ground nuts had been removed some weeks previously, in the hope of finding here and there a nut to eat." Others were existing entirely on the fruit of the "i lupai" tree, commonly with bad effects on their health. In the village of Sivadi the people were idle all day long. At five in the evening many of the children had had nothing to eat all day, and little the day before. Revisiting the same villages in June, Mr. Goudie "was struck with the miserable condition of the children." In one village he paid a surprise visit to twenty huts at supper time, and in none did he find any store of grain, or anything that could be turned into money. Two ollocks of ragi would not be too much for one man, yet in one hut he found the mother cooking five ollocks for ten people, and in another the same quantity for seven people. In a third hut, an old woman was cooking some bones. In the remaining seventeen there was no trace of fire or food.

In the Tiruvallur Taluq, Mr. Goudie being pressed by some Christians, who were in want, opened a relief work for all comers. He offered common earthwork, and took no pains to make the offer public. On the first day 40 came, on the next 72, on the third 170, and by the end of the week 800. At first each man was paid 1¾ anna, and each woman 1¼ anna. These wages were afterwards reduced to 1½ anna and 1 anna, but without reducing the numbers. The people came from twelve villages, and represented at least as many castes. Still one more fact is mentioned, the increasing number of anæmic children admitted to the Wesleyan Mission Hospital, more indeed than Mr. Goudie has known in thirteen years. In consequence of the numbers from one village, Dr. Wood visited it, and found that many of the children showed marked signs of starvation.

Remittances on India for Rs. 20,00,000 were on Wednesday offered for tender by the India Council, and applications amounting to Rs. 1,50,30,000, all in bills, were received at 1s. 3d. and 29-32nds. The following amounts in bills were allotted:—Rs. 15,73,000 on Calcutta, Rs. 2,67,000 on Bombay, and Rs. 1,60,000 on Madras, all at an average of 1s. 3.906d. Tenders at 1s. 3d. and 29-32nds will receive about 13 per cent. Later the Council sold bills for Rs. 40,000 on Bombay and Rs. 38,739 on Madras at 1s. 3d. and 15-16ths. Last week remittances for Rs. 10,40,000 were sold for £68,934, making the total disposed of from April 1 to Tuesday night Rs. 7,00,63,556, producing £4,647,802. Next week 20 lakhs will again be offered.

THE "EXPLANATORY" MEMORANDUM.

THE slim Blue-book, playfully entitled an "Explanatory Memorandum," heralds the Budget. It is dated June 20; so that it has taken about five weeks in passing from the hands of the Financial Secretary to Members of Parliament and the British public, who have only about half that time to master its contents before the Statement of the Secretary of State. Inasmuch, however, as all that the House of Commons is expected to do in the matter is to signify whether or not in their opinion "it appears by the Accounts laid before this House that the total revenue of India for the year ending March 31, 1900, was" so-and-so; "that the total expenditure in India and in England charged against revenue was" so-and-so; "that there was an excess of revenue over expenditure of" so-and-so; "and that the capital outlay on railways and irrigation works not charged against revenue was" so-and-so; it can hardly be objected that there is too little time for verifying the necessary facts. The vote would be triumphantly passed whatever the rightness or wrongness of the details, so long as "it appears by the Accounts laid before this House" that the four totals required work out, or rather are worked out on the face of the Accounts, to the sums specified in the terms of the resolution. No criticism is expected; no examination of the correctness of the details; no question whether the revenue has been properly raised or the expenditure has been properly incurred; no enquiry into the course or the tendency of the policy of the Government of India. So the "Explanatory" Memorandum is limited closely to the figures. What the figures mean in totals or in particulars "may be safely left" to the officials, who profess that there would befall some frightful and final cataclysm if the House were really to take in hand the investigation of Indian affairs. Still, the fact remains that the ultimate responsibility lies on Parliament and on the British people; and in view of that not unimportant consideration we venture to renew our complaint that the indispensable information is so long delayed and so grudgingly afforded.

As usual, there are contemporaries in the British Press that reflect with faithful devotion the complacency of officialdom. The "Globe," for example, finds that the statistics of the Memorandum "make very satisfactory reading." "They clearly prove, for one thing, that the recuperative power of the population is much greater than some pessimist oracles wish to have believed." We do not know whether the "Pioneer" is a "pessimist oracle," but we do know that the "Pioneer" is well entitled to an opinion on the "recuperative power" of India, that it backs Government as strongly as it can in reason, and that it has frankly and justly characterised this sort of optimistic gush as "very like nonsense." We shall be interested to read its opinion of the "Globe's" summary conclusion: "In short, the whole picture is that of a country in almost affluent circumstances. There is no stint of expenditure perceptible in any needed direction." Call you this backing of your friends? We do indeed. We fancy we can see the honest blush mantling deep in the experienced cheek of the Secretary of State, and the speechless amazement even of the Indian officials at the facile gullibility of British journalism. There are, indeed, very different views. "For the bureaucrats to assume in their Olympian serenity at Simla that the rupees can be distilled from the existing population with the usual regularity," says the "Investors' Review," "argues a hopeless aridity of mind impossible to realise." And again: "To pile upon the backs of the Indian people in their present position these additional military charges is monstrous." The difference is readily accounted for. The editor of the "Investors' Review" knows what he is talking about. For ourselves, we can hardly entertain a doubt that the Indian authorities, both at Whitehall and at Calcutta, will, in private moments at least, set more store by the rasping criticism than by the saponaceous adulation. The British public will judge at their peril. The Indian opinion is in no kind of doubt whatever.

Last week we anticipated the Memorandum, and pointed out certain extremely shaky bases of the Budget on the side of Revenue. The most ominous point in the Budget Estimate on this side is, of course, the anticipated increase of £476,900 in the Land Revenue—an increase slightly higher than Sir Edward Law doubtfully bargained for, and that too in the face of the recent recrudescence of the famine. "In view of the condition of the Indian people," says the "Investors' Review," "this is monstrous." It means a vast increase of misery. "Multiply it into rupees," proceeds our contemporary, "and it means one rupee exacted from over 7,100,000 land holders, and one rupee to tens of millions of such holders is more than £10 would be to many thousands of British workmen." Yes, "in view of the condition of the Indian people"; but the mischief is that, whatever the condition of the Indian people, the Budget constructor has got to make ends meet somehow. One can only repeat that the strain will snap the cord in his hands one of these days, and at no distant day. If we turn to the side of Expenditure, we find no more solid grounds of satisfaction than on the other side. It looks very fine, no doubt, that the surplus of the Budget Estimate of 1900 should figure ten times as large when it comes to be the surplus of the Revised Estimate for 1900-01: an increase from £160,300 to £1,640,000. But the main cause of the improvement turns out to have been a pure accident: "The Army charges were less by £1,276,400, owing to the absence of regiments from India in South Africa and China, the stoppage of the regular transport of reliefs, and reduction in the payments for ordnance stores." And of course the pendulum swings back with increased force in the current Budget; for "the main increase is that of £2,083,200 in the Army Effective Charges, in consequence of the expected return of troops from South Africa and China, the re-armament of the Native Forces, improvement of the Transport Service, large purchases of ordnance stores, and other measures for increasing the efficiency of the troops." Here again is a monstrosity, to balance the Land Revenue monstrosity. "So," says the editor of the "Investors' Review" despairingly, "militarism is going to do India to death likewise. No warning seems to be of the slightest use." The country that bears such burdens would, indeed, require to be not merely in "almost affluent circumstances," but in circumstances altogether and indubitably affluent. And, sure enough, the anticipated surplus for 1901-02 is given at £690,900, which, if nearly a million worse than the Revised Estimate of 1900-01, is fully half a million better than the Budget Estimate of 1900-01. So the delusive appearance of "prosperity" and "recuperative power" is maintained by the figures, which cannot be supposed by any one that knows India to bear a healthy relation to "the condition of the Indian people."

Still, when we look back to 1898-99, we find a comparative deterioration of some two millions—£1,949,973—in the Budget for 1901-02. An increase of £443,083 in the net revenue is overpowered by an increase of £2,393,056 in the net expenditure, of which no less than £1,654,192 is an enlargement of the charges in England, the chief item being £688,194 "for ordnance stores and other military purposes." The expenditure on famine relief and insurance in 1899-1900 is given at £2,128,447; in the Revised Estimate for 1900-01 at £4,245,000; and "the normal provision"—which was reduced in 1894, but not raised even under the pressure and warning of the subsequent famines, "the greatest of the century"—£1,000,000, for 1901-02. So we are to shut our eyes to clamant facts and hope once more for a normal year! If other outlays and loss of revenue necessitated by the famine, with loans to Native States and agricultural advances, be taken in, "altogether the drain on the balances is estimated to have been £4,536,000 in 1899-1900, and £9,268,000 in 1900-01." Even if it be admitted that these sums were adequate to the duty, we will not say imposed upon the Government, but recognised by the Government, they might be expected to spur the authorities to devise methods—or to consider dispassionately methods suggested by others—for checking the causes of the expenditure at their source. The Famine Union proposals will furnish a test. The Home Charges stand in the current Budget at £17,747,300—still a progressive increase. The disproportion between railway and irrigation development continues to be well marked. The net return on the open railway lines in 1900 (24,594 miles) is estimated at 5.50 per cent., as against 5.37 and 5.39 in the two preceding years; but the enormous capital outlay is undergoing but slow redemption, while the interest runs

with the calendar. While 1,387 miles of new line were opened for traffic in 1900-01, only 392 miles received sanction. Yet for the current year the Government undertakes financial responsibility or gives a direct guarantee to the amount of £6,926,200—a very large increase on both the preceding years. On the other hand, Irrigation will have to be content with £752,000—an increase of about £125,000. The Government does not seem to hope for much help from irrigation in the deadly combat with famine; and it is difficult to understand, "in view of the condition of the Indian people," why so much money should be put into railways when so many people are distressed and dying from sheer want of money to purchase food enough to keep body and soul together. The liabilities of the country total £225,885,000, and assets are calculated at £216,416,000. The balance is on the wrong side. But it may be well to state how these assets are calculated:

> The assets, in addition to sums due from corporations and railway companies and the cash balances, comprise the value of railways and irrigation works constructed or purchased by the State; but these values are taken as being identical with the total capital outlay upon each undertaking, as shown in the capital accounts of India; they do not represent the commercial value of the undertakings, nor are they based upon the prices that it has been necessary to pay in order to acquire those undertakings; otherwise the assets would, of course, appear larger.

This, then, is the official meaning of "assets" for the present purpose. Here at least is an "explanatory" item that enables one to understand in the right way a statement that one would not otherwise have been likely to interpret properly. Is there any other business in the world where "assets" bears such a meaning? The taxation averages 3s. 3d. per head. Let the British reader deduct this amount from the average income of say 35s. per head—Mr. Digby will hardly allow it to be 18s. even—and then let him try to realise "a country in almost affluent circumstances."

OUR LONDON LETTER.

Westminster, Thursday.

"She has the brain of a man and the heart of a child"—the words were spoken of the Empress Frederick in her early youth by the Prince Consort. As Princess Royal of England the late Empress had always figured largely in the minds of her countrymen, but it was not, perhaps, till the death of the Emperor Frederick, with its accompanying revelations of the pitiful jealousies and intrigues of German court life, that she became a popular heroine. She was the eldest and the most intellectual of the late Queen's nine children, and she had survived two of her four brothers, the Duke of Albany and the Duke of Edinburgh, and one of her four sisters, the Princess Alice, whose death twenty-three years ago added a chapter to the annals of maternal devotion. It is almost exactly a year since the Duke of Edinburgh died, and just six months since the death of Queen Victoria. Profound sympathy is felt with the King in his latest bereavement.

As the process of jettisoning Government cargo goes on the prospect of a fairly early prorogation becomes brighter. The Royal Declaration Bill passed its third reading in the House of Lords the other night, but at the same time the Prime Minister, with some bitter complaints of Roman Catholic ingratitude, indicated that there was no intention of proceeding further with the measure. A curious incident of the discussion was Lord Salisbury's repudiation of a suggestion by Lord Braye that he had "lowered his voice and inclined his head" in mentioning the name of the Virgin Mary. Unfortunately for his auditors, Lord Salisbury has a habit at all times of lowering his voice and inclining his head. On this occasion, as if to leave no room for misapprehension, he threw his head back, and spoke with a resonance which fairly made the Chamber ring.

Earlier in the week Lord Rosebery, speaking on the same contentious Bill, had startled the Peers by smiting the table with his clenched fist with a vehemence worthy of a stump orator. The demonstration evoked a sharp remonstrance from the Lord Chancellor. "I wish that I too had the advantage of a contiguous piece of furniture," said Lord Halsbury, "so that by muscular exertion I might redress the feebleness of my argument." But this was not the only memorable passage in the Lord Chancellor's speech. Lord Rosebery had complained of the sensitiveness of the great man to criticism. "Let me tell the noble earl," retorted the bewigged dignitary with telltale warmth, "that neither I nor my colleagues care a ——." The word was almost out, but happily for the ears of the bishops and the peeresses, Lord Halsbury checked himself in time, and after a little hesitation murmured mildly that he and his colleagues did not care at all for Lord Rosebery's strictures. Lord Rosebery stayed away for some days afterwards.

What Lord Salisbury is reported to have called "Hughliganism" enjoyed a striking triumph over the Government in the House of Commons last Tuesday. Sir John Gorst in championing a Bill promoted by the London School Board had defied Lord Hugh Cecil and all his works. Lord Hugh's vengeance was as swift as it was terrible. He rose and publicly accused the Vice-President of a breach of faith, declaring with double-edged malice that even the Irish members would rather cut off their hands than ignore, as Sir John Gorst had done, an honourable understanding. The Minister's reply to the tirade was not, as it ought to have been, a castigation of his rancorous critic, but a meek surrender to the latter's demands. The whole House was scandalised. A division was challenged, from which the Government emerged with a majority reduced to nine—the lowest ebb of the Session. While the discussion was in progress Mr. Balfour stayed away, with the object no doubt of giving his enterprising cousin a free hand. "The family for ever" was Mr. Swift MacNeill's exclamatory comment on the incident. Nothing so damaging to the credit of "the family" has happened this Session.

Supporters of the Government are apt to forget at times that what is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander. A few nights ago they were sharply reminded of the adage. Pursuing their usual tactics they had persistently interrupted a speech by Mr. Lloyd George. Presently, Sir Edward Grey rose to continue the debate. He was received with cheers by the Ministerialists, and cries of "'Vide" by the Nationalists. The latter indeed refused to allow Sir Edward to proceed till the Chairman, Mr. Lowther, had virtually apologised for having failed to maintain order during Mr. Lloyd George's observations. It was a striking object lesson, although from one point of view it would have been more satisfactory if the Nationalists could have selected a Tory scapegoat—say, Mr. Balfour, Mr. Chamberlain, or Lord Hugh Cecil. But the Session is not yet over, and while there is life there is hope.

By the death of Mr. W. W. Bramston Beach the House of Commons loses not only one of its worthiest members, but also its "Father." Mr. Beach first entered Parliament in 1857 and had retained his membership without a break for forty-four years. There are several claimants to the vacant dignity, but it is really impossible to regard any of them as a patriarch. Sir James Fergusson was elected earlier even than Mr. Beach, but he has been in and out too often to qualify for the competition. Possibly, the succession should devolve on Sir Michael Hicks-Beach who has been a member continuously since 1864. But he is run pretty close by Mr. James Lowther, Sir Joseph Pease, Dr. Farquharson, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, and others who can look back on thirty-five years of Parliamentary life. At the best, therefore, Sir Michael can only plume himself on being the big brother of the House.

Terrified by an anonymous paragraph the Government have taken steps to prevent an endless series of divisions on the remaining votes of Supply. When the guillotine falls, as it will do at ten o'clock to-night, nearly a hundred items of expenditure amounting to many millions sterling, will receive the sanction of Parliament automatically. Hitherto, members have been allowed to vote on each item separately—a privilege that has never yet been abused. Why Mr. Balfour should have departed from the practice of former years is not quite clear. He says he had "heard"—the triviality of the excuse is quite characteristic—that the Nationalists were contemplating a division on every single item, which would have entailed a succession of divisions extending over three days and nights. The rumour, on the face of it, was preposterous, but it was enough to inspire Mr. Balfour with the idea of a new inroad on the rights of the House of Commons. Unfortunately, the House of Commons showed no more wisdom than its leader. It quaffed the suicidal cup, as Mr. Bowles said, with a docility which should encourage the Government to further enterprises of the kind.

A mild sensation has been caused in the world of politics and society by the announcement of Mr. Herbert Gladstone's engagement. His friends had begun to regard Mr. Gladstone as a confirmed bachelor. Though he is still a young man, he has been so long in Parliament that many people probably regard him as a veteran in years as well as in public service. His fiancee is a daughter of Sir Richard Paget, who for nearly thirty years sat in the House of Commons as one of the members for Somersetshire. Sir Richard was, and doubtless is, a fine old Tory, while Mr. Gladstone is a stalwart young Liberal. The bridegroom-elect has been absent from Westminster for some days, but is expected to return to his political duties this evening.

NOTES FROM BOMBAY.

Bombay, July 20.

The announcement in yesterday's "Times of India" that his Majesty the King has given his cordial approval to the scheme recently formulated with unanimity by the Government of India for instituting an Imperial corps of cadets of the Princely houses of India has been received with satisfaction here. It does honour to the practical statesmanship of the administration over which Lord Curzon presides. That King Edward has given his gracious sanction to this corps was naturally to be expected. The Prince, who visited India in 1875, is still remembered. No doubt many of the old Princes and Chiefs with whom he personally came into contact have long since been gathered to the majority. But some of the younger still survive, notably H.H. the Gaekwar of Baroda. Like his mother, King Edward has been regarded with the greatest esteem by the populace. His geniality, his courtesy, his princely bearing, and above all his broad-minded sympathy are still the theme of universal praise. And it is indeed matter of the greatest satisfaction that the very first important event of his reign in connexion with India, the most priceless dependency of the British Crown, should be the institution of a cadet corps for the scions of the Princes and aristocracy of the country. It is to be hoped that later on we may have still greater cause to rejoice. Let him take some fitting occasion by the hand and fully enfranchise the Indian as a British citizen with every privilege which his august mother's proclamations have enjoined, but some of which are still withheld.

As to the corps itself, of course it is a tentative experiment. If well nursed and placed in competent but courteous and sympathetic hands it is sure to bring the success which is anticipated for it. Care, however, will be taken that the cadets are not dragooned as the poor Princes are by our political agents. Again, care will have to be greatly exercised in the selection of the cadets. The statutory Civil Service was wrecked on account of the many bad selections which were made, though it was a most beneficent scheme, under which by this time we should have as many as 140 statutory Native Civilians instead of the 57 that were at the date of the Public Service Commission's appointment.

The Bombay Land Revenue Code Amendment Bill is still undergoing severe criticism at the hands of the Press and the public in various parts of the Presidency. The Government has assumed an attitude of "non possumus" towards the prayer of the Presidency Association and the Deccan Sabha for a postponement of the consideration of the measure. But this attitude is not a new one. It has been the way of all Indian Governments that the more there is public agitation on a given piece of legislation, the greater is its persistence in going on with it, though the outer world should proclaim its inexpediency. No wonder that the Government of Bombay has endeavoured to silence the agitation by explaining the principles of the Bill. But the explanation when stripped of its surrounding sophistry comes to nothing. The question now lies in a nutshell: Has the Government any power under the Land Revenue Code of 1879 to declare "unoccupied lands" under survey tenure as lands possessing no right of alienation and heritability? The occupancy tenant may fail. His land may be forfeited. But does the forfeit involve forfeit of the "inherent" right in the land of its owner for the time being? What the Government is now contemplating by an adroit flank movement is to convert all lands under survey tenure, when unoccupied, into lands belonging to the State with no rights of alienation or heritability. But this is perfectly unconstitutional. The Government is endeavouring to ride a coach and six through its previous legislation in order by "a stroke of the pen" to establish State landlordism in all its nakedness and absolutism. It is this radical revolution of a most mischievous and far-reaching character which has alarmed the public and led to the agitation now going on. It remains to be seen whether in face of the strong public opinion against the advisability and expediency of the measure Lord Northcote's Government will have the courage to force it into law.

CHRONICLE OF THE WEEK.

Thursday, August 1.—In the House of Commons, Lord Stanley stated that the weekly cost of the war during July was approximately £1,250,000. Mr. Balfour said the Government had no proposal to make respecting a grant to General Buller. Some discussion took place in Committee on the War Loan Bill, Sir William Harcourt criticising the financial soundness of raising 60 millions on Consols when only some 40 millions were really required. Sir Michael Hicks-Beach did not think the margin was at all superfluous. The Bill passed through without amendment.

In the House of Lords the grant of £100,000 to Earl Roberts was agreed to. A long debate took place on the amendment of the Earl of Rosebery to refer the Royal Declaration Bill to a Select Committee. This was lost, and the House then went into Committee on the Bill, which was afterwards reported. The Royal Titles Bill was read a third and the Education (No. 2) Bill a first time.

A donation of £5,000 was received by the Lord Mayor for the National Memorial to Queen Victoria from the delegates of the New York Chamber of Commerce who recently visited this country.

Lord Kitchener reported that a number of native scouts who had surrendered to the Boers with a Yeomanry patrol in the Orange River Colony were shot by them in cold blood. One of the troopers was also shot, the Boers stating that they mistook him for a Cape Boy. Commandant Kritzinger had announced to General French that it was his intention to shoot when captured all natives in British employment, whether armed or unarmed.

Friday, August 2.—In the House of Commons, Lord Cranborne stated that the date fixed for the evacuation of Peking by the troops, with the exception of the Legation Guards, was the 15th inst. On the House going into Committee of Supply on a Colonial Office vote of £58,000, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman asked for information on the state of affairs in South Africa, and especially as to the policy contemplated by the Government when the war was over. Looking back over a year, he thought the outlook was now far less favourable. Mr. Chamberlain defended the Government from a charge of undue reticence; justified the concentration camps as a policy of humanity; justified also the policy of devastation as necessary to prevent supplies from falling into the hands of the Boers; saw no reason for interfering in cases when it was alleged that criminals were sometimes convicted on Kaffir evidence; contended that there would be no real breach of the Cape Constitution unless Parliament were not called together in October; and asserted that the war was now entering on a third stage, that of brigandage and outrage. Lord Kitchener's policy of setting up blockhouses to shut off the Boers from protected districts was succeeding so well as to permit the return of a considerable number of British troops at the end of the winter campaign in September. It was essential to maintain tranquillity in these districts so as to re-establish industry to a certain extent, as a preliminary to the work of conciliation. The enemy must therefore be dealt with on severe methods in such districts. It was clear that Botha and De Wet would accept no terms short of complete independence; so this must be "a war to the finish." The war in Cape Colony was a war against absolute ruffianism. He had answered Kritzinger's threats by telegraphing to Lord Kitchener that all persons charged with having committed or authorised such practices were to be tried by Court-martial, and if found guilty were to suffer the penalty of death. He did not regard the military situation as at all unsatisfactory. "The reason we have not employed natives is not because we do not think they would make valiant soldiers and might fairly be placed in the field against even civilised nations, but because, in the peculiar circumstances of South Africa, we believe it would be bad policy." "As offensive belligerents, the Kaffirs, so far as I know, have not been employed. On the other hand, again and again we have taken Kaffirs and found dead Kaffirs in the Boer ranks with arms in their hands or beside them." Whatever the explanation, "they have been used by the Boers for every ancillary purpose." Sir Edward Grey took exception to the tone and spirit of Mr. Chamberlain's speech.

In the House of Lords, on the motion for the second reading of the Education (No. 2) Bill, Lord Reay moved as an amendment a resolution declaring that no Bill could be satisfactory which did not enable the Board of Education to empower School Boards to carry on out of the school fund any schools affected by the recent judgment for the period of one year to the same extent and

on the same conditions as were sanctioned by the Board of Education for the year 1900-1901. The amendment was negatived without a division, and the Bill was read a second time.

Mr. Asquith delivered the inaugural address at the opening of the summer meeting of University Extension students at Oxford. He said the object of the extension movement was to awaken intellectual interest and to bring the student to conceive knowledge not as a means, but as an end.

A Boer laager at Joubert's Farm was reported to have been captured by the British on the night of July 29. Seven Boers were killed and a number of cattle and horses captured. The text of Mr. Kruger's reply to Botha's proposal to surrender was given in a Reuter's telegram from Standerton. It directed the Boer leaders to continue fighting, and promised that "alleviation will be sent when needed."

SATURDAY, August 3.—The Paris correspondent of the "Daily News" telegraphed an account of an interview with Mr. Kruger. The ex-President denied that any steps had recently been taken by him in view to obtaining mediation. He had once already proposed peace on honourable terms, and his proposal remained unmodified. When the liberty of the Boers was guaranteed they would lay down their arms, and until then they would go on fighting, even to the third generation.

Dr. Kuyper, the Dutch Premier, was said to be contemplating diplomatic action to secure the dispatch to the Boers in the field of a large ambulance, and to obtain permission for Mr. Kruger to return to South Africa.

The Right Hon. W. W. B. Beach, "Father of the House of Commons," died in Westminster Hospital, as a consequence of injuries received by him in a cab accident the previous evening.

It was officially reported that H.M. torpedo-boat destroyer Viper, the fastest vessel in the world, grounded on a rock near Alderney during a fog, and had, it was feared, become a total wreck. No lives were lost. The Viper was taking part in the autumn Naval Manœuvres.

An unofficial message from Standerton stated that a force under Colonel Stewart recently made a night march into the country round Amersfort, to the east of Standerton. They got within striking distance of a Boer laager, but found that Botha had left. Twenty-one Boers were taken prisoners and 350 head of cattle were seized. At daybreak on the 29th the column was attacked by 300 Boers under Christian Botha and other commandants, but was able to fight its way back. On the 29th a party of scouts went out from Platrand, a station between Standerton and the Natal border, to Verzamel Bergen and surprised Cornelius Erasmus's laager. Seven Boers were killed and nine captured. In the Orange River Colony the country was being absolutely denuded of all foodstuffs. The Kaffirs were being brought in and placed in special camps, so that the Boers can no longer obtain food at the native kraals.

SUNDAY, August 4.—The London correspondent of the "Manchester Guardian" reported that the series of addresses which Mr. Asquith is about to deliver in his constituency will have considerable significance. Mr. Asquith holds stoutly to the opinion that the Liberals could certainly form an alternative Government, but he thinks that before a definite bid for Ministerial authority is made it is the duty of the leaders to indicate clearly the general domestic policy. This is the object of his campaign. He will address himself in particular to the four problems which he mentioned in his Hotel Cecil speech, and indicate what in his view are the lines upon which the Liberal party should proceed in regard to secondary education, the housing of the poor, and the taxation of site values.

MONDAY, August 5.—In the House of Lords there was a brief discussion on the motion for the third reading of the Royal Declaration Bill. The Premier said that the opposition shown by the Roman Catholics to the Bill had rendered its chances of passing through the other House less hopeful. The Bill was read a third time without a division. The Education (No. 2) Bill passed through Committee without amendment.

The Empress Frederick, mother of the German Emperor, and formerly "Princess Royal" of Great Britain, died at Cronberg.

In a despatch from Pretoria of Saturday's date Lord Kitchener stated that Major Goold-Adams, Lieutenant-Governor of the Orange River Colony, has inspected the refugee camps in that colony and reports that the people are well looked after and completely satisfied with all that is being done for them. A bad outbreak of measles had occurred at Kroonstad amongst those brought in by General Elliot from Reitz. The male refugees at Kroonstad presented a most loyal address, and the peace movement is spreading fast in all the camps.

TUESDAY, August 6.—In the House of Commons, the Chancellor of the Exchequer stated that the total estimated expenditure of the year (war expenditure included) was £201,134,000.—Mr. Chamberlain stated in outline what had taken place at the conference on a Court of Final Appeal, and said the great majority of the delegates were opposed to any drastic changes. The Government would, in accordance with the resolutions passed at the conference, ask the various Governments to suggest such alterations of procedure as might appear to them advisable.—In Committee of Supply on a vote of £6,500,000 in aid of the administration of the Transvaal and Orange River Colonies, Sir W. Harcourt complained that the estimate departed in important particulars from our accepted rules of finance, and urged that it would be dangerous to leave the administration of these territories to men who held that the Natives ought to be paid only enough to provide themselves with the bare necessaries of life. The object of the Pass Laws was "to hold men to labour," to use the American euphemism current before the abolition of slavery. Mr. Chamberlain said half-a-million would be spent on a settlement scheme to assist resumption of agricultural industry. Nothing in the nature of slavery could be tolerated. Flogging, if resorted to at all, must be limited to the most serious cases. As to the Pass Laws, the system of the West Indies might be followed with advantage. The laws of the Transvaal were unwise, harsh, and cruel, but their worse features had been greatly modified. The Dutch in South Africa regarded the Natives as an inferior race, and so the question required very delicate handling. The Government would introduce a just and humane system of administration for the Natives, but they were not going to interfere with the right of the employer to engage labour.

In the House of Lords, Lord Lansdowne stated that the satisfactory progress of the negotiations would before long reduce the foreign troops in China to the provisional strength of 13,000, of whom 4,100 would be British troops. The Anglo-German Agreement enforced two principles: that the adhering Powers desired to respect the territorial integrity of China, and that we desired "the open door" in all river and sea ports. In Manchuria, all we want of Russia is that our treaty rights be respected, and that Russia do not use her preponderance to our detriment or to the detriment of the Powers associated with us.

Tributes of admiration and respect were paid to the memory of the Empress Frederick by the Press throughout the civilized world.

Lord Kitchener, in a telegram dated Monday, stated that since July 20 the columns had reported 48 Boers killed, 19 wounded, 220 prisoners, 57 surrenders, and the capture of one Pom-Pom, 141 rifles, 8,660 rounds of small-arm ammunition, 186 wagons, and large numbers of horses and stock.

WEDNESDAY, August 7.—In the House of Commons Mr. Balfour moved and Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman seconded a humble address to the King, expressing the deep concern of the House at the great loss sustained by his Majesty through the death of his sister, the Empress Frederick, and praying him to convey to the German Emperor the profound sympathy of the House with the Imperial Family. The resolution was unanimously agreed to. Later, in debate, Sir W. Harcourt complained that the business of the House was in confusion and chaos, and that to the many disasters attributable to the war must now be added the demoralisation of the House.

Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, speaking at Peckham, criticised the policy of the Government in the conduct of the war in South Africa, urged conciliation, and castigated Ministers for failures and blunders in domestic legislation. The Government, he said, was a Government of vested interests.

Important British successes were reported near Jagersfontein and Fauresmith, and in the Kaffir River district. General French was operating successfully in Cape Colony.

VOX INDIÆ CLAMANTIS.

["'In their prosperity will be our strength, in their contentment our security, and in their gratitude our best reward.' The forthcoming debate on the Indian Budget reminds us that we have still to profit by the wise words of Queen Victoria."—"Daily Paper."]

PROSPERITY!—when year by year
Grim poverty I see
Draw ever nearer and more near,
Devouring all my children's gear—
Why, what a mockery is here
Of Her benign decree!
What strength, O England, shall be thine
When such prosperity is mine?

Contentment!—what contentment lies
In that poor slavish heart,
That dumb despair, with sunken eyes,
That bears its ills, and rather dies
A thousand deaths than dare to rise
And play a freeman's part?
Ah, what security can be
On such contentment based by thee?

My gratitude?—ah, empty name!
Thy charitable mites
But feed to-day the feeble frame
That starves to-morrow; for the same
Old wrong grows on untouched. I claim
Not charity, but rights—
England, what gratitude have I?
Canst find reward in apathy?

—From "Punch" (July 31.)

THE FAMINE IN INDIA.

The Secretary of State for India has received the following telegram from the Viceroy, dated August 3:—

Famine. Rain has continued and though total to date in inland districts only about half normal prospects gener-

ally good. Prices have fallen in eight Bombay districts last week. Reduction of relief confined to Kaira, and figures this week show no change of any importance, but a considerable reduction shortly expected. Number of persons in receipt of relief:—Bombay, 455,000; Bombay Native States, 42,000; Baroda, 32,000; Hyderabad, 9,000; Madras, 3,000; Central India States, 5,000; Central Provinces, 4,000; Mysore, 3,000. Total, 553,000.

The "Investors' Review" (August 3) says:—At last we have some further figures from the Viceroy regarding this scourge. His latest telegram is dated July 27. . . . . The number of persons in receipt of relief, presumably at a date approximate to that of the message, was 556,000. This shows a decrease of 29,000 on the total given on July 6. Is this, then, an improvement? By no means; it is an indication that the rains have been insufficient over great tracks of country to draw the people away to cultivate their fields, and therefore the true inference is that later in the year the numbers in need of relief will greatly multiply. Probably many of those who have in Bombay gone back to their fields are in a physical condition that renders them unfit for severe labour, and it is noticeable that even in that Presidency the number on gratuitous relief has increased 6,000—within what period the Viceroy is careful not to state. Is there any possibility of rousing the people of this country to the awful position of our dependency?

The "Leicester Mercury" wrote (July 30):—Are Englishmen generally aware that more than half a million of people are still on relief works in India on account of the famine? The melancholy fact is brought out in a message received from the Viceroy dated July 27. . . . There are hopes of improvement, but the circumstances are grave enough, and they may become worse.

THE "EXPLANATORY" MEMORANDUM.

OPINIONS OF THE BRITISH PRESS.

The "Investors' Review."

Two points only emerge in Lord George Hamilton's explanatory memorandum upon the accounts and estimates of the Indian Government, just issued preliminary to the dog days debate likely to come off at the tail of the Parliamentary Session, as usual. One is the fact that an increase of £477,000 is looked for in the land revenue. In view of the condition of the Indian people this is monstrous. In no fair and legitimate way can a larger land revenue be obtained from these people in the current year than in the past. To attempt to exact it, therefore, means to increase the misery of millions, for what does such a sum imply? Multiply it into rupees and it means one rupee exacted from over 7,100,000 land holders, and one rupee to tens of millions of such holders is more than £10 would be to many thousands of British workmen. There are millions of cultivators in India at the present time not merely living on the confines of starvation, but actually starving. For the bureaucrats, therefore, to assume in their Olympian serenity at Simla that the rupees can be distilled from the existing population with the usual regularity, argues a hopeless aridity of mind impossible to realise.

The other point is the proposed increase of no less than £2,083,200 in the Army effective charges in consequence of the expected return of troops from South Africa and China, re-armament of the Native forces, improvements of the transport service—how perennial that item is—purchase of ordnance stores, and other measures for increasing the efficiency of the troops. So militarism is going to do India to death likewise. No warning seems to be of the slightest use. The machine grinds on its way and pays no heed to the symptoms, visible even at this distance, of decay, and one might say almost dissolution, in the fabric of our Indian Empire. To pile upon the backs of the Indian people in their present position these additional military charges is monstrous. Will these matters be effectively taken up in Parliament? Oh no, a few faithful and enlightened men will utter their protest to an indifferent House, the Budget will be perfunctorily voted, with the help of the closure if necessary, so that members may get away to the grouse moors, and no more attention will be paid to the real state of Indian affairs than if the peninsula had no more connexion with us than Yunnan. Its assumed wealth still feeds our vanity, therefore why pay heed?—(August 3.)

The "Globe."

The voluminous statistics set forth by Lord George Hamilton in his exposition of Indian Finance make very satisfactory reading. They clearly prove, for one thing, that the recuperative power of the population is much greater than some pessimist oracles wish to have believed. After passing through two terrible famines in quick succession, a considerable surplus for the current financial year is already in sight. This, too, in spite of substantially increased expenditure on the Army, Public Works, and Civil Administration. Furthermore, the Calcutta Treasury finds itself so much strengthened as to have a large sum to spare for special grants to provincial Governments. In short, the whole picture is that of a country in almost affluent circumstances. There is no stint of expenditure perceptible in any needed direction. Whether, however, this happy prospect will be realised in full measure depends on a factor beyond the wise control of Lord Curzon and his hard-working colleagues. There are still some extensive tracts which require a good deal more rain than the monsoon has yet afforded, while the number of people at the relief works has latterly shown an increasing tendency. Happily, the rainy season should last for some time longer, and it may reasonably be hoped that the parched areas will get the moisture they need before the monsoon ceases its benevolent work. But the less dependence placed upon that most uncertain source of supply the better; and it is a matter for congratulation, therefore, that the Viceregal Government has set aside an increased amount for irrigation works. The splendid part they played in mitigating human distress during the late famines is clearly indicated by the increase of the water-rent receipts on both occasions.—(August 1.)

THE SO-CALLED BUDGET "DEBATE."

(From the "Manchester Guardian," August 2.)

The number of people in this Imperial nation who interest themselves in the actual government of our greatest dependency is not large. With a laudable desire to make its doings clear, the India Office has just issued an "Explanatory Memorandum" on Indian Accounts. We fear that the public are not positively thirsting for information. The discussion of the Indian Budget generally makes an empty House of Commons. In reply to a question in the House of Commons, Mr. Balfour said the other day that no "unusual facilities" could be given this Session for the discussion of the Indian Budget. Everybody knows what the usual "facilities" are. The debate is taken in a thin and weary House in the last hours before the prorogation. What is not perhaps so generally known is that the Indian Budget does not need and does not obtain the sanction of Parliament. Lord George Hamilton excited some little surprise when he said in the debate on the Address last February that it is not in the least necessary, by law or otherwise, for the Secretary of State for India to make his annual statement concerning Indian finance. But he was right. The Act for the Better Government of India provides (section 53) that the Accounts shall be presented to Parliament. But no motion is necessary, and the motion which is in fact proposed is as perfunctory and academic as possible. Here, for example, is the text of the motion agreed to at the close of the debate of July 26 last year:—"That it appears by the Accounts laid before this House that the total revenue of India for the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1899, was £67,595,815, that the total expenditure in India and in England charged against revenue was £64,954,942, that there was a surplus of revenue over expenditure of £2,640,873, and that the capital outlay on railway and irrigation works not charged against revenue was £3,279,316." The form is the same every year. In other words, the House of Commons is merely invited to say that certain totals are shown in the closed accounts for the year ending sixteen months before the debate comes on. The motion not merely deals with a set of facts wholly beyond recall; it is also framed in terms which make it out of order to propose any amendment raising a question of policy. Only on one occasion has an amendment been practicable, and that simply pointed out that the published totals involved a mistake in addition. It is therefore inaccurate, and it may well be misleading, to speak of "the annual debate on the Indian Budget." The Budget proper is not submitted to any decision on the part of the House of Commons. There is usually, it is true, a general discussion on the motion to go into Committee on the Accounts. But if an amendment to that motion were carried it would amount to a vote of "no confidence." And the utility of the discussion has been seriously curtailed in recent years because the Secretary of State has adopted the practice of making his speech no longer in Committee but on the motion to go into Committee. In this way he takes up the best part of the time during which amendments of a political kind are in theory permissible.

Mr. Courtney in his recent book on "The Working Constitution of the United Kingdom and its Outgrowths" says that "it has been part of the overruling mind which has shaped the organisation of Indian government to make it not too responsive to the varying temper of the House of Commons." That is no doubt wise. But it may be asked whether the existing system does not in some respects err on the other side. Mr. Courtney adds that if the salary of the Secretary for India, like that of the Colonial Secretary, were submitted to a vote, "the opportunity for a real debate would be given which, experience suggests, would be used rather than abused." The avoidance of this course betrays, he thinks, "too great a jealousy of the House of Commons." The Royal Commission on Indian Expenditure, of which Lord Welby was chairman and Mr. Courtney a member, unanimously recommended in its Report of April last year that the British Exchequer should contribute to the cost of the India Office an annual sum of £50,000, which is roughly the amount paid every year for the Colonial Office. The Majority Report gave as a reason for this recommendation—"in order that there may be no ground for allegation that India is treated less favourably than other parts of Her Majesty's Empire." The Minority Report went a step further and added that "in order to maintain the controlling authority of the House of Commons over Indian expenditure the salary of the Secretary of State for India should be placed upon the British Estimates." But the India Office would have none of either recommendation. It did indeed urge the Treasury to agree to grants in aid amounting to the total sum recommended by the Royal Commission. But it redistributed the sum under new heads of its own choosing, believing it to be more important "to put an end to certain minor payments that are now made by India, and thus to simplify the accounts between the two Governments." Lord George Hamilton's salary therefore continues to be paid by the tax-

payers of India and never comes before Parliament. The strategy of the India Office led to a discussion in the House of Commons last February, when Lord George Hamilton had nothing to say about simplification of accounts, but urged that if his salary were put on the Estimates "he would have every conceivable motion made from different parts of the House for increases in the salaries of the numerous civil and military servants of the Indian Government." The objection hardly seemed convincing, especially as Mr. Bowles interjected, with perfect accuracy, that motions of the kind would be out of order.

Sir Henry Fowler, as usual, came to Lord George Hamilton's rescue. He too was silent about the simplification of accounts. But he contended with vigour that the Government of India was a very difficult and complex piece of machinery, that it had been devised by great men fifty years ago, and that if the salary of the Secretary of State were put upon the Estimates "they would have taken the first step towards making Indian questions the subject of party conflict in this House." That is obviously the line of argument which Mr. Courtney has in mind when he says that the present system is due to too great a jealousy of the House of Commons. Such a feeling was exhibited by a prominent Anglo-Indian journal, which condemned the proposed contribution from this country to the cost of the Tirah campaign on the ground that the British workman would come to think that he was "paying for the Indian concern" and therefore had "an indefeasible right to control its working." But is it not high time to analyse the rather common statement or claim that Indian questions are not party questions? When Lord Salisbury moved the second reading of the Royal Declaration Bill in the House of Lords the other day he said: "I do not intend to treat this as in any sense a party question. It must be determined by Parliament according to its own will in pursuance and exercise of its supreme power." When was this language held by the Secretary for India or by any Minister concerning an Indian question? Let us clear our minds of cant. It is the invariable practice for the Government Whips to tell in a division on any Indian matter. The occasion is invariably treated as involving a question of confidence, and the Secretary for India, because he is a member of the Cabinet, can count upon the votes of Ministerialists. A typical example may be given. At the close of a debate on the retention of Chitral Lord George Hamilton said in the House of Commons on February 17, 1896, that "before sitting down he congratulated his friends behind him that the first time they had to give a party vote last year they were actuated by true political instincts when by an overwhelming majority they assented to this forward movement." But when was that "party vote" given? It was given on September 3, 1895, on an amendment to the motion to go into Committee on the Indian Accounts. Such being the disposition of the Ministerialists—a disposition perhaps inseparable from a system which makes the Secretary for India a member of the Cabinet—what is the meaning of the phrase "Indian questions are not party questions" if it does not mean "the Opposition should refrain from opposing"? Or, in other words, a Liberal Opposition should not apply Liberal principles to Indian problems. The first step towards a remedy is to appreciate the facts, and the present facts appear to be that the annual set debate on India is unreal, and that the most serious objection which has been urged against proposals to make it real aims at avoiding, as if it had not yet arisen, an abuse incidental to the existing system.

THE BOMBAY LAND REVENUE BILL.

OPPOSITION TO THE NEW PROPOSALS.

THE MINORITY REPORT.

The following is the text of the minute of dissent signed by the Hon. Mr. G. K. Gokhale and the Hon. Mr. S. A. Chhatre, members of the Select Committee appointed to consider the Bombay Land Revenue Code Amendment Bill:—

We regret we are unable to sign the report which a majority of the members of the Select Committee have adopted. The Bill, we fear, has little to recommend it beyond the intentions of Government. At the same time it is obviously capable of being so worked as to revolutionize the existing land tenure over a large and constantly-increasing area of the Presidency. Its leading principles are open to serious objection; and its introduction at the present juncture has been widely misunderstood and has been attended with results which all must deplore. The public have had hardly any time to examine the precise character and scope of the measure and formulate their objections—the Bill having been first published only on the 18th May last, and that too simply in the English language. Meanwhile a vague feeling of panic—perfectly unwarranted so far as the intentions of the Government are concerned—prevails everywhere both among agriculturists and sowcars, the former imagining that the Bill threatens their proprietary rights over their holdings and the latter being under the impression that it will eventually lead to a partial confiscation of their property. Under the circumstances we feel bound to recommend that the Bill should be dropped altogether, or that, at any rate, its further consideration should be postponed till next year.

AGRICULTURAL DEPRESSION ADMITTED.

(2) There is no doubt that the agrarian situation in the Presidency at the present moment demands the most anxious attention of Government. A succession of calamitous seasons—unprecedented in the history of the Presidency—have, besides causing untold suffering to millions, reduced the bulk of the agricultural population to very sore straits. Government have, no doubt, done much to relieve immediate suffering; but they feel, and very properly feel, that mere temporary palliatives cannot meet the requirements of the situation; and the question of the hour with them is how best to help the broken peasantry, not merely to tide over the present crisis, but to secure to it, as far as possible, a clean fresh start in life again. The idea of Government seems to be that it is not so much the unfavourableness of seasons or the amount of rigidity of the State demand as the rayat's habit of reckless borrowing in normal years that is responsible for his difficulties and sufferings in years of drought. They believe that the survey tenures introduced more than half a century ago—under which the holdings are both heritable and transferable—has been a mistake in the case of large numbers of agriculturists, as it has only encouraged their improvidence and turned many of them into mere serfs of money-lenders. Government, therefore, think it desirable to try in place of the existing survey tenure, another on a non-proprietary basis, under which the holder will not have the power to alienate his holding in any way without express sanction of Government. And they propose to take power to substitute this inferior tenure, wherever they please and wherever they get a chance, in the exercise of their executive discretion.

FIVE PRINCIPAL QUESTIONS.

(3) In considering the proposals of Government, five questions principally suggest themselves:—(1) Are Government correct in their analysis of the rayats' difficulties? (2) Is the proposed experiment likely to prove a remedy? (3) What harmful consequences may be feared from the creation of the new tenure? (4) Can Government creation of a tenure in the case of forfeited lands, consistently with their past declarations and the obligations of good faith, and in accordance with the working theory of land administration in the Presidency? (5) Is the method adopted for creating the new tenure free from objection? Of these we will deal with the last question first, as it involves considerations of great constitutional importance.

SHORT LEASES.

(4) We are strongly of opinion that the proposal to empower Government to give waste, relinquished or forfeited lands on such leases as they, in the exercise of their executive discretion, think best, is open to grave objection. That it has been the practice of Government to grant land on short leases and without the power of alienation in special cases in Gujerat, Khandeish and elsewhere, though such a course is not authorised by the existing law, is no reason why the practice should be legalised in general terms. We think it is unsafe and not in harmony with the spirit of British administration that such vast powers should be conferred upon the Executive Government and that a most important branch of the administration of the Presidency should be removed from the regulation and control of express statutory provisions, and put simply under the direction of executive authority. In no province in British India is the choice of the land tenure thus left to the discretion of the Executive Government. Thus in the Punjab, when it was deemed expedient to create a special tenure for waste lands in the Chinab Valley, Act III of 1893 was passed by the Supreme Legislature for the purpose, and no such power to create the tenure in the exercise of executive discretion was conferred on the Government. In our Presidency, too, when it was decided to constitute such a special tenure in parts of Sind, the Legislature was appealed to, and Act III of 1897 was passed dealing with the matter. No case has been made out by Government for demanding such extraordinary powers in the present instance, and we think that there is no need for conferring these powers, as the Legislature is always at hand to assist the executive whenever special legislation is found to be necessary. It has been estimated that if the proposed Bill is immediately passed into law, a vast area—about one-third or one-fourth of the total cultivable area of the Presidency—will come at once under the operation of its provisions, and this area will steadily increase as in course of time more and more holdings come back into the hands of the State owing to forfeitures or relinquishments. We are unable to contemplate without grave apprehension the prospect of such a vast extent of land being left at the free and unfettered disposal of Government—to be given on such leases as they, in the exercise of their executive discretion, may deem proper. The unsettling effect on the public mind of such a surrender by the Legislature of its proper functions in favour of the executive is not difficult to foresee. A general sense of insecurity in regard to land tenure will come to prevail in the Presidency—the failure to pay a single year's assessment in time enabling the Executive to force upon the occupant what lease they please. Such insecurity, such impairing of public confidence in a matter affecting the material interests and the confidence of millions of people, is most undesirable, and we therefore recommend that whatever new tenure Government may wish to create and whatever terms Government may desire to attach to leases granted under the new tenure should be clearly specified in the Bill, so that the public may know the extent of its legal rights as also of the powers of Government in the matter.

NEW TENURE.

(5) The next question on which we desire to offer a few observations is how far Government are at liberty to create the new tenure in the case of forfeited lands. When Government seize lands in respect of which the State demand has not been paid, the power to forfeit is exercised by Government to realize, if possible, the assessment which is due to them. For this purpose the occupancy rights of the land may be sold by Government to the highest bidder; but it is provided that if a sum in excess of the

amount, which in arrears, is realised by such sale, the surplus shall be paid to the defaulting occupant. When, however, no sale can be effected, Government have the power to dispose of the holding in such other manner as they please. We are of opinion that this procedure is in harmony with the generally-accepted theory of land administration in British India. According to this theory, cultivated land is not the property of Government. Government are only entitled to their assessment as the first charge. On this point, a clear and definite pronouncement was made by the Government of India in a despatch addressed by them to the Secretary of State in 1880; and we think that this pronouncement is binding on the Local Government no matter what the views of individual officers may be. "We do not," wrote the Government of India in that year, "accept the accuracy of the description that 'the tenure (of land in India) was that of cultivating tenants, with no power to mortgage the land of the State,' and that 'land is the property of the Government held by the occupier as tenant in hereditary succession so long as he pays the Government assessment.' On the contrary, the sale and mortgage of land were recognized under the Native Governments before the establishment of British power and are not uncommon in Native States at the present time, and if such transactions were rarer than under our administration, it was mainly because the tenure being insecure the property had little value. It has been one of the greatest objects of all the successive Governments of India since the days of Lord Cornwallis, if not to create property in land, at all events to secure and fortify and develop it to the utmost. The Government undoubtedly is the owner of a first charge, the amount of which is fixed by itself on the produce of all revenue-paying land in India; but over the greater part of the Indian Empire it is no more the owner of the cultivated land than the owner of a rent-charge in England is the owner of the land upon which it is charged." We think this unequivocal and emphatic declaration on the part of the Supreme Government ought to dispose effectually of the attempt which is from time to time made to claim for the State the ownership of the soil in India. Now if the State is not the owner, land which comes upon its hands through forfeitures comes to it simply because it must have the means of securing the payment of the "first charge" which the occupant has failed to pay. And it, therefore, becomes the duty of the State not to derive from the forfeited holding anything in excess of the amount which is necessary to satisfy its own claim. But if Government now acquire the power to give forfeited holdings on such leases as they deem proper, there is nothing to prevent them from requiring the occupants—though they may not do this in the first instance—to pay a rack-rent to the State instead of the present survey assessment, which, in theory at least, is understood to be half the net assets. Again, if these lands be given on short leases, Government, on the expiry of the leases, will be able to appropriate any portion of them for a public purpose without paying any compensation to anyone—which means that the power to order a forfeiture will benefit the State more than it strictly should. The scheme of Government thus amounts in practice to a nationalisation of forfeited lands, by buying up for the State the rights of old occupants for year's assessment or whatever the amount in arrears may be. We think that such a course is not in keeping with the past declarations of Government and is incompatible with the existing theory of land administration in British India.

THE RAYAT'S POWER OF BORROWING.

(6) It has been said that Government desire to take power to introduce the new tenure because they are anxious to make what they regard as an "interesting experiment." We regret to observe, however, that as far as we can judge of such an experiment beforehand, it appears to us to be foredoomed to failure. The theory of Government is that the power of free-transfer which the rayat enjoys under existing land tenure puts him in possession of a large amount of credit which he uses in so reckless a manner that he ends by involving himself hopelessly in debt and then becoming practically the serf of his money-lender. And Government therefore think that by taking away this power of free transfer from him his ruinous credit will also be taken away and he may thus be compelled to remain out of debt. This view of the matter, however, appears to us to be based on serious misapprehensions as to what leads the rayat to borrow. The average rayat borrows, because the produce of his holding does not suffice to maintain him and his family, to pay the State demand with rigid punctuality alike in good and in bad years, and to furnish him with the means for meeting the expense of extraordinary occasions. And if he cannot borrow on the strength of his lands, he will borrow on the strength of his annual crops and thus be as much a serf of the sowcar as ever. Indeed unless Government introduce greater elasticity into their system of revenue collections, abating at the same time their demand where it is excessive, and unless they make provision for the reasonable needs of the agriculturists in the shape of Agricultural Banks or a more liberal and flexible system of tagai advances, it is impossible to understand how, by merely taking away from the agriculturist his power of free transfer, his lot will be improved. In fact it is to be feared, as the Deccan Sabha have said, that in a few years the occupants holding under the new tenure "will be face to face with far more serious difficulties than they have had to encounter in the past," and that Government will in all probability think it necessary to "turn them out of their holdings for the non-payment of Government assessment."

A LOWERING OF POSITION.

(7) But while the chances of the new tenure proving a remedy for the rayat's difficulties are extremely slender, its introduction cannot fail to be attended by several consequences of a very regrettable character. In the first place, agriculturists will now be prevented from asking for suspensions or remissions of land revenue even in bad years by the fear that Government may take the opportunity to force the new tenure on them. It has now been generally admitted that one great defect of the Bombay Land Revenue system is the absence therein of a provision for a liberal scale of suspensions and remissions in years of drought. It was hoped that the pointed manner in which this defect had of late attracted general attention would result in the Bombay Government prominently recognising the claims of this form of relief in their Famine Relief Administration. If the present Bill, however, passes into law, agriculturists will, as a rule, be deterred from coming forward to claim this form of State assistance even in years of great distress for fear that thereby they may lose their present proprietary rights over their holdings. Another evil which will result from the creation of the new tenure will be the degradation of large numbers of agriculturists from their present proprietary status to that of mere tenants of the State—a moral lowering of position calculated to take away their sense of independence and responsibility, which cannot fail to produce an unfortunate moral effect upon their character. When the survey tenure was introduced, it was claimed on behalf of Government that the agriculturists would thereby be removed "from the pupillage and surveillance of Government officers." It is sad to think that after half a century, Government should think it necessary to undo their own work and relegate these men once again to "the pupillage and surveillance" from which they were declared to have been freed. Moreover, when the survey tenure was created, Government extinguished the miras tenure, which was then in existence over large areas in the Deccan. This miras tenure was admittedly superior to the survey tenure, inasmuch as the State demand in the case of mirasdars was permanently fixed and their land was besides not liable to forfeiture for non-payment of assessment. To reconcile the public to the extinction of the miras tenure, it was urged on behalf of Government that while the mirasdars would under the new system not lose much, the upari tenants of the State, who constituted the majority, would be great gainers in that they would enjoy the right of free transfer for the first time. We therefore think that the present proposal to reduce a large proportion of the agriculturists once more to the position of mere tenants of the State practically violates the understanding on which the people of the Presidency reconciled themselves to the extinction of the old miras tenure.

THE REAL REMEDY.

(8) The last observation that we desire to offer in this connexion is that it is not by abolishing or restricting the right of free transfer that the lot of the average agriculturist will be ameliorated. As we have observed above, he borrows because his holding is often too small for his needs. One cause which drives him into the hands of the sowcar is the rigidity of the State demand, which has to be paid alike in good and bad years. "It it evident," said the Deccan Rayats' Commission of 1875, "that a revenue system which levies from the cultivators of a district, such as that now dealt with, the same amount yearly without regard to the outturn of the season, must, of necessity, lead to borrowing. In bad years the rayat must borrow." The Deccan Agriculturists' Relief Commission of 1891-92 endorsed this opinion, and suggested a greater elasticity in the matter of revenue collection, the fixing of more suitable dates for the different instalments, and other executive measures for mitigating the cast-iron character of the present system. We are not aware that these suggestions have been adopted by Government, though we find the authority of the Commission of 1891-92 quoted in support of the principle of the present Bill. However, these suggestions, even if adopted, would prove only small palliatives. The real remedy for the chronic difficulties of the rayat must be sought in the promotion of non-agricultural industries, to relieve the pressure of surplus population on the soil, a better organisation of real credit, an abatement of the State demand where it is excessive, and a statutory guarantee, in the absence of a permanent settlement of this demand, that the assessment will not be raised at the time of revision unless there has been a rise in prices and that the increase will not be more than a certain proportion of the rise in the latter.

BUILDING FINES.

(9) With regard to the proposed amendment of Section 48 of the Land Revenue Code, we fail to understand why it is included in the present Bill. Its proper place is in a general revision of the Land Revenue Code, such as has been admitted by Government to be necessary. Under the existing law, Government have the power to levy a special assessment on building areas (Section 48), to levy a fine for appropriating agricultural land for non-agricultural purposes (Section 65), and to fix a period not greater than 99 years for which the special assessment shall be in force (Section 102). But they have no power to make rules providing for a periodical revision of such assessment, so that the revision may take place in the case of all buildings and as a matter of course, and it is this power which Government seek to obtain by amending Section 48 of the Code. We understand that the entire non-agricultural value of all unalienated land is claimed by Government as their exclusive property. We do not think that this is a just claim. The fact that there were neither building fines nor special assessments of building areas before 1865 shows that the claim of Government is only an assertion of State landlordism of a comparatively recent date. As the proposed amendment of Section 48 is calculated to strengthen the hands of Government in enforcing their theory to the fullest extent, we think it our duty not to agree to the amendment till the whole question of the assessment of building areas is placed by Government on a juster and more satisfactory basis.

Imperial Parliament.

Thursday, August 1.

HOUSE OF COMMONS

EDUCATION.

Sir JOHN KENNAWAY asked the Secretary of State for India whether he could state what effect had been given by the Local Governments in India to the Government of India's Resolution in the Quinquennial Review of Education, by Mr. J. S. Cotton, published in the "Gazette of India," November 4, 1899, for the clear determination of the relations between private enterprise and the State.

Lord G. HAMILTON: The Resolution of the Government of India contained for the most part directions for further enquiry and report. I understand that Local Governments have submitted the reports called for in it, and that these are now under the consideration of the Viceroy. I have not, however, received the final conclusions of the Government on the questions discussed, which are of a very extensive and complicated character. No new principle has, so far as I am aware, been laid down regarding the relation between private enterprise and State expenditure on Education, which continues to be regulated by the principles accepted in the Report of the Education Commission of 1883.

STATE LOSS ON THE RAILWAYS.

Mr. HERBERT ROBERTS asked the Secretary of State for India whether he would state what, up to the end of the year 1900, was the amount of the arrears due from the railway system of India to the general revenues of the country.

Lord G. HAMILTON: Up to the end of 1900 the total loss upon Indian Railways was Rx. 57,800,000; but in the financial year 1899-1900 there was a net gain of Rx. 115,000. These figures of course take no account of the immense indirect gain to the prosperity of the country and to the State Revenues from the construction of railways.

SCINDE, PUNJAB, AND DELHI RAILWAY.

Mr. CAINE asked the Secretary of State for India if he was now able to say what action he proposed to take with regard to the sum of money lying at the Bank of England to the credit of the Scinde, Punjab, and Delhi Railway, which railway was taken over by the Government of India in 1886.

Lord G. HAMILTON: I am in communication with the Treasury on this subject, but am not yet in a position to make any statement.

INDIAN TROOPS SERVING ABROAD.

Mr. CAINE asked the Secretary of State for India if he could state what number of troops, British and Native, of the Indian Army were now on service outside the frontiers of India; at each respective place at which they were stationed; and what troops serving in South Africa were to be withdrawn; and, if so, how soon.

Lord G. HAMILTON: Since I answered a similar question addressed to me by the hon. Member on February 18 last, the number of Native troops serving in China has been reduced by some 9,000 men, and it will be further reduced. Otherwise the figures I then gave remain substantially unaltered. The British troops sent from India for service in South Africa will, I hope, be replaced at an early date: but I am unable as yet to say how soon that will take place.

COOPER'S HILL COLLEGE.

Sir WILLIAM ANSON asked the Secretary of State for India whether the Board of Visitors of Cooper's Hill College had made any report since representatives of the Universities were added to the Board; and, if so, whether he was prepared to lay the report upon the Table before the discussion of the Indian Budget.

Lord G. HAMILTON: A report has been submitted making various recommendations which are now under consideration. I will lay it on the Table as soon as possible together with a copy of a letter conveying my decision on the points raised. But the papers will not be ready for publication for some time to come.

Friday, August 2.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

STAFF CORPS PROMOTIONS.

Sir THOMAS ESMONDE asked the Secretary of State for War whether he could state when promotion in the Staff Corps was to be accelerated in accordance with the various recommendations to that effect.

Lord G. HAMILTON: The promotions will take effect from the 10th July last, the date of the receipt in India of the sanction of the Secretary of State in Council.

Tuesday, August 6.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

AGRICULTURAL BANKS.

Sir MANCHERJEE BHOWNAGGREE asked the Secretary of State for India if his attention had been drawn to a Note prepared last December by a committee appointed by the Governor-General of India to consider the question of agricultural banks in India; whether the Board of Revenue had submitted its views on the various suggestions made in that Note, as required by the last paragraph therein; and whether he had taken the scheme into consideration, and was prepared to sanction its adoption.

Lord G. HAMILTON: I have seen a Note recording the conclusions arrived at by an informal Conference which sat last December to consider the question of Agricultural Banks. Copies of that Note were sent to the various Local Governments, and their opinions were invited, and have recently been received and are now under the consideration of a Committee sitting at Simla for the purpose; I hope shortly to receive from the Indian Government their views upon this most important question.

A FINAL COURT OF APPEAL.

Mr. BRYCE asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether it was intended to present to Parliament any Papers relating to the recent Conference at the Colonial Office with representatives of the self-governing Colonies on the subject of a Final Court of Appeal; and, if not, whether the discussions had advanced so far as to enable any general conclusions that might have been already reached to be stated to the House.

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: The conference was invited for the purpose of eliciting the opinions of the colonies and of the Government of India in regard to a final Court of Appeal. No scheme or suggestion was laid before the conference by his Majesty's Government, but a general expression of opinion was asked for. After a preliminary discussion at the first meeting it was agreed that the colonial delegates should meet separately and formulate resolutions for consideration at a subsequent meeting of the full conference. The majority of the delegates, after several private meetings, submitted resolutions to the effect that appeals should continue to lie from the colonies and from India to his Majesty in Council, and that appointments to the Judicial Committee should from time to time be made from the Dominion of Canada and Newfoundland, the Commonwealth of Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, the Crown colonies, and India, that the persons so appointed should, if Judges, vacate any judicial office held at the time of such appointment, should hold office for life or a term of years, and should be paid an adequate salary. It was further suggested that arrangements should be made for securing a larger attendance of Lords of Appeal at sittings of the Judicial Committee, and that the colonies should suggest such alterations of procedure as might tend to the avoidance of delay, the simplification of procedure, and the lessening of costs. Mr. Justice Hodges, who represented the Commonwealth of Australia, was, however, of opinion that there should be one Imperial Court of Final Appeal in which should be vested the appellate jurisdiction of the House of Lords and Privy Council. Mr. Justice Emerson, representing Newfoundland, agreed with the majority of the Colonial delegates subject to the above proposal for one final Court of Appeal. Sir James Prendergast, representing New Zealand, while also agreeing with the majority of the colonial delegates, considered that the time might arrive at no remote date for the establishment of a new final Court of Appeal for the whole Empire, but he saw no reason for any colonial representation on the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council of colonies whose legal systems were substantially the same as that of England. It appeared from these opinions that, while not absolutely unanimous, the great majority of the delegates were opposed to any drastic changes in the present Court of Appeal; and, accordingly, his Majesty's Government do not propose to suggest such changes, although they will, in accordance with the resolutions of the conference, ask the various Governments concerned to suggest such alterations of procedure as may seem to them desirable.

Mr. BRYCE: The conference will not meet again?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: No, it is finally determined.

LASCAR STOKERS ON "ORIENT" STEAMERS.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND asked the President of the Board of Trade whether he could state the reasons why the Orient Steamship Company were discharging their white crews in order to provide employment for Asiatics and Lascars; whether he was aware that dissatisfaction obtains in the Australian Colonies in consequence of this change; and whether the Australian Government had threatened to withdraw the mail subsidy.

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: I have communicated with the Orient Steam Navigation Company, and have received the following reply:—(1) Orient Steam Navigation Company are not discharging their white crews in order to provide employment for Asiatics and lascars. (2) Orient Steam Navigation Company have been driven to make an experimental trial of lascar stokers owing to the drunkenness, the mutinous behaviour, and the wholesale desertions of the British stokers hitherto employed by them, by reason of which the efficiency of their mail service had been impaired and heavy loss had been sustained by the company. (3) In other respects the Orient Steam Navigation Company are making no change in the manning of their ships. Apart from the stokers, the conduct of the British seamen and of the rest of the ships' complements have always been excellent. With respect to the last part of the question, I have seen statements in the Press to the effect that a desire exists in Australia for the exclusive employment of white labour on mail steamers, but I have no official information on this subject.

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